

John Hall to George Washington, July 5, 1757, Letters to Washington and Accompanying Papers. Published by the Society of the Colonial Dames of America. Edited by Stanislaus Murray Hamilton.

FROM CAPTAIN JOHN HALL.

NOVA September[??]CO HALIFAX July 5th. 1757

SIR/:

I wrote you last from New York, & have now to acquaint you Our fleet arriv'd at ys. Place ys. 30. Ultimo, after a blustering passage of 9 days

Heaven propitious to our Designs, happily carrd. the french Fleet under Marq. Beaufremont off this Coast a very few days before, where he had been cruising sometime with 2 Sail of the Line—had they fell in with us, the Event wou'd have disconcerted all Measures for the ensuing Scene, & frustrated the grandest Design that ever was projected in this Quarter,¹—Since we have been here, 11 of the English Fleet with a 60 Gun Ship have drop'd in, who seperated from the Whole in a Fog on the Bank of Newfoundland—they have on board 11 Regiments, convoy'd by 15 Sail of the Line & 5 Frigates, under the command of Vice Admirl. Holbourn² evry moment we expect to see them in the Offing, & immediately on their Arrival we proceed, but God knows where, tho' generally supposed to be against Louisbrough—We are well assur'd theres 21 or 22 french sail of the Line laying ready for us, who brō over lately 12 french Regiments, & an hourly Expectation of more, with the 3 Regiments at ye Place We shall have in all 20. 19 of wch consisting of as many thousands they being all compleat will embark on ye. Expedition, & yet many are diffident

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of our Success, for by so considerable an Armament as the Enemy are said to have against us, they are appris'd of our designs, & the Opposition will be violent. Hitherto we have been crowned with Success, all Health & Spirits greatly elated at our good Luck in escaping the French Fleet.—What but ye Influence of Heaven cou'd induce Beaufremont after he had cruised off this Place 6 Weeks, having known of our Embarkation, & confident of our Weakness to leave it 6 days before our Appearance, had he fell in with us, not only the Loss of our Troops but the taking of our General must have been the Consequence. — In all likelihood the Fate of America is impending, & the Revolution of 6 Weeks will greatly change the face of Affairs in regard to the british Interest in America.—Heaven avert the worst³—I send the List of our Squadron & the Regiments on this Expedition,⁴—if it gets to hand soon it will be the more amusing.—I shall make it my business at any time to transmit you, what I may think new or agreeable, & I hope whilst you do me the honour to receive them, you'll think I execute the Task with great Pleasure —

here is all the Preparations you can conceive, such a design can require, more than I can imagine & much more than I can describe.—If I am well, I shall write you from the next Place

Interim wishing you ye greatest Felicity I subscribe Sr. with [???]g. regd. F.[???]m;. obt.
JNO. HALL

1 Lord Loudoun's expedition against Louisburg.

2 Francis Holburne, Vice-Admiral of the Blue, who had sailed from Cork in May with a fleet of ships of war and transports intended for the reduction of Louisburg. He reached Halifax July 9.

3 Captain Hall's gloomy forebodings were realized in the pestilence that subsequently scourged the fleet, and in the violent storm on the night of September 4, which drove many of the ships on shore and dismasted almost all. Governor Dinwiddie, in his letter of November 24 to Colonel Bouquet, mentions having "news of the disaster attending the Squadron under Admiral Houlbourn in a violent storm, when the Tilbury a 60-Gun ship and a sloop was lost."

4 See Wynne's History of the British Empire in America, vol. ii. p. 70.